



Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians
7500 Odawa Circle, Harbor Springs, MI 49740

TRIBAL COUNCIL TRAVEL NARRATIVE
Submitted by: David Harrington, Tribal Council Member

Training/Event: United Tribes of Michigan
Location: Sault Sainte Marie
Date of Event: May 10/11, 2017

I would like to thank the tribe for the opportunity to travel and learn more about the issues facing Indian country.

After arriving at the hotel, I went to the evening event with two guest speakers and a nice dinner.

First speaker of the evening was Congressman Jack Bergman. He spoke on many subjects relevant to the tribes and the issues we face in the years ahead. Though very noncommittal in many areas, he was very open to input from the tribes. This is his first year in government and has much to learn. I know the feeling. I really like the approach he is taking by educating himself on the many areas of importance. I spoke with him afterwards and asked that he always seek counsel from tribal leaders before deciding their fate. He said that he would.

The next speaker of the night was Civil Rights Director Agustin Arbula. He spoke on several subjects but most of it centered on the continuing Funding of the tuition waiver. He spoke highly of the work that Melissa Kiesewetter is doing and has done for tribes in this very important program. The evening session ended after his question answer, not many question for this speaker.

The next item on the agenda involved the Resolution from the Pokagan Band Tribal Council. Their approach to eradicating the controversial subject of mascots. The school district has embraced the Redskin Mascot and are not receptive to change. This resolution specifically addresses the R-word and its use. UTM passed it unanimously.

The following morning UTM Meeting was called to order. Representatives from many Tribes were present. Frank Ettawageshik updated us on several upcoming events and meetings. NCAI in Milwaukee, United Nations Indigenous Rights and Line 5 Pipeline Advisory Board in Petoskey.

Melissa Kiesewetter presented us with a great deal of information with regards to tuition waivers. She urged leadership of the tribes to direct their lobbyist to seek full funding of the program. She also urged us to continue to develop friends in the state legislative body.

The next two presenters on the agenda were lawyers and insurance representatives. Though very informative on topics I found them to be very dry speakers. Then the Grand Rapids Public Museum presented us with their work on the burial mounds south of the city. They are actively working to preserve and protect the area around the sacred sight.

Stacey Tadzerson from the MI Dept. of Health and Human Services was next on the agenda. She spoke about many issues including ICWA, Data sharing and how the state needs to follow federal laws with regards to tribes.

Tom Durkee was next on the agenda but I stepped out for a few minutes and by the time I returned he was done. Short presentation.

After a break for lunch the meeting resumed with several more presenters. Rochelle Ettawageshik presented a video and made the case for greater funding from the tribes in support of the National Indian Child Welfare Association.

The FEMA presentation was informative in how they approach emergencies in the state and federal levels.

Stacey Cooper and Peter Vicaire USVA made a short but informative presentation. The various programs that are in place but underutilized including VA loans on trust lands. Tribal Health Reimbursements, and Cemetery Grants.

The Governor's Spokesperson Dave Nyberg updated us on the pipeline issue, and heard from several members of the need to eliminate the threat to our Great Lakes.

The final presenter was Tyler LaPlaunt from the Great Lakes Indian Tribal Health Board. We need to make sure that our tribe is fulfilling the statistical obligations for a greater funding to the Biimigii Area. The biggest reason we are the lowest funded region is due to statistics and proving that there is a need with our region.

The meeting was adjourned and we called it a day.

Thanks for this opportunity to represent our tribe.

I respectfully submit this travel narrative to my fellow Council members and the Citizens of LTBB.

Attachments:

- List attachments